

VZCZCXRO7322
RR RUEHGI RUEHRN RUEHROV
DE RUEHKM #0463/01 1260512
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 060512Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1394
INFO RUEHKKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0803
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUEHGI/AMEMBASSY BANGUI 0064
RUEHTO/AMEMBASSY MAPUTO 0542
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 3578
RHMFIUU/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 KAMPALA 000463

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS TO USAID AND OFDA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [ASEC](#) [EAID](#) [UG](#) [SU](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: NORTHERN UGANDA NOTES (APRIL 1-30, 2009)

KAMPALA 00000463 001.2 OF 003

¶1. Summary: The following Northern Uganda Notes provide information on the situation on the ground and USG activities aimed at meeting Mission objectives in northern Uganda. These objectives include promoting regional stability through peace and security, good governance, access to social services, economic growth, and humanitarian assistance. Post appreciates feedback from consumers on the utility of this product and any gaps in information that need to be filled. End Summary.

PEACE AND RECONCILIATION PROCESSES

¶2. Gulu University held a conference entitled "Juba Peace Talks: Lessons Learnt Workshop" on April 23-24. The objective was to identify lessons that could be applied in future engagement with stakeholders in the peace process between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Government of Uganda. Attendees included local politicians, religious and traditional leaders, donors, members of the diaspora, the military, non-governmental organizations, and media. The Danish Ambassador stated that LRA leader Joseph Kony and the remnants of his forces should be dealt with on a regional basis, with the partners stressing the need to protect civilian populations. He emphasized that the peace process resulted in an improved security situation in the north. He urged the redevelopment of northern Uganda.

SECURITY UPDATE

¶3. The joint military operation, now named "Rudia II," continued to make steady progress in pursuit of the LRA in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Captured LRA Lt. Col. Thomas Kwoyelo said that the military operation has disrupted LRA communications command control in an interview with the New Vision newspaper on April 26. He said that Kony is not interested in a peace deal.

¶4. Uganda Peoples Defense Force (UPDF) spokesperson, Major Felix Kulayigye reported that the UPDF is evaluating reports of possible fresh supplies to the LRA rebels inside the DRC. In March, the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) intercepted 13 trucks carrying food supplies from Uganda to Doruma, DRC, an area with an LRA presence. The paperwork for the cargo indicated it was carrying supplies for CARITAS, a Catholic charity. CARITAS denied that it was delivering food to the LRA. Upon investigation, the UPDF found that the shipment documentation was fake and that CARITAS was not involved. The investigation is ongoing.

- - - - -
HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY
- - - - -

¶15. Our Gulu field office advisor reports that the security situation remains calm in the LRA-affected districts of the north. The return of internally-displaced persons (IDPs) and recovery and reconstruction activities continue. The joint military operation in DRC is a distant concern for residents in northern Uganda. IDP return figures remain strong with UNHCR reporting 538,000 individuals having returned to their villages of origin in the four Acholi districts of Gulu, Amuru, Kitgum, and Pader.

¶16. The major source of conflict affecting the recovery process is land disputes. Deaths are regularly reported as a result of land disputes across LRA-affected districts. The most serious problems are reported in Gulu, Pader, and Amuru districts. Other areas outside the Acholi sub-region are also reporting incidents. USAID has implemented programming designed to engage local communities on these issues, including through the "No Violence Over Land" public outreach campaign activity under the Northern Uganda Transition Initiatives (NUTI) program and through the Pader Peace Forum project.

¶17. Gulu District Chairman Norbert Mao hosted a meeting with humanitarian assistance donors regarding the closure of camps in the district on April 15. At the meeting, Mao emphasized that camp closure and returns will be conducted according to the camp phase-out guidelines issued by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). He further emphasized that activities related to camp phase-out and returns must be coordinated with the district government. He noted that a key to securing resettlement was provision of basic services such as health and education. He stated in the meeting that he had requested USAID to expand its support in

KAMPALA 00000463 002.2 OF 003

the education sector. Mao also noted that the district was planning to set up a fund to support landless and Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVIs) who continue to live in the camps. He requested donors consider supporting the fund. He also noted that a list of landowners requesting compensation for use of their land for IDP camps had been submitted by all Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) in the region to the Ministry of Lands.

¶18. USG Activities: In support of the USAID's country strategy development process, USAID health and education staff from Kampala joined implementing partners in assessment visits to seven districts in the Acholi and Lango regions of the north. The objective of the trip was to consider USAID/Uganda's support to seven Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan (PRDP) districts in the areas of planning, coordination and service delivery. The team met with local government officials and beneficiaries in the field. The results of the trip have been consolidated into recommendations for the U.S. Mission. A major focus is to improve coordination with the existing district development planning processes.

¶19. USAID's conflict advisor reviewed nine activities in the area of economic conflict mitigation under USAID's Stability, Peace, and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda (SPRING) program during a field visit to Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, and Lira the week of April 1. The advisor noted that SPRING's economic activities appeared to be good initiatives. However, more effort needed to be placed on integrating these activities with other components of the program such as access to justice and peace and reconciliation. Another recommendation was the need for smaller grants to Ugandan community-based organizations to improve the community impact of the SPRING activities.

¶10. USAID/SPRING, in partnership with the Ugandan Veterinary Association (UVA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, organized a week of events to celebrate World Veterinary Day on Saturday April 25 as part its on-going support to the promotion of private veterinary services in northern Uganda. Activities included free vaccination services in Gulu and Amuru Districts for areas not covered under Veterinary Civil Affairs Project exercises conducted by Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA). SPRING sponsored a

livestock farmer training in Gulu for 100 farmer group representatives on "Livestock Management and Disease Surveillance", radio talk shows hosted by the District Veterinary Office and the UVA, and animal check points to advise on proper animal transport. The occasion marked the first time World Veterinary Day has been launched in northern Uganda. The activity not only furthered the goal of ensuring economically productive livestock in the north, but also contributed to stabilization efforts in northern Uganda.

¶11. USAID's Livelihoods and Enterprises for Agricultural Development (LEAD) program completed an assessment of the agriculture input sector in Uganda as part of its efforts to improve quality of inputs including equipment, fertilizers and pesticides to farmers. Key findings included: Uganda's per hectare fertilizer use is one of the lowest in the world, resulting in lower crop yields; farmers are not well informed about the use of agricultural inputs; the input dealer network in Uganda is poorly organized and dealers lack the knowledge or technical skills to properly advise farmer clients on the use of inputs; counterfeit inputs abound and regulation is weak. Of importance to reconstruction and development in the north was the finding that rural farmers lack access to inputs, the quality is poor, and dealer infrastructure is non-existent in rural areas. Sixty percent of LEAD activities are conducted in the north in PRDP-targeted districts and as such the assessment placed emphasis on the north. The LEAD program is using the information gathered to tailor its farmer training and is also developing other interventions based on the information.

¶12. USAID/Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) approved four grants in April. These included support for reconciliation activities, including traditional fireside chats, a program supporting the government's attempt to diminish land violence in Amuru, and support to the Gulu and Amuru district engineers for supplying computers and training on critical information technology programs. Important events were the inauguration of Amuru Alero primary schools which were fully rehabilitated and provided with teacher housing and a kitchen; the handover of bicycles to village leaders in Agoro sub-county, Kitgum District; and a consultative meeting at the Kitgum District Local Council levels of leadership on the preparation of their plans for the PRDP. Also, traditional cleansing ceremonies in areas to purify the land and facilitate IDP returns were ongoing across the north. To date, USAID/OTI has been able to work directly with 81,000 people across the north in its various activities.

KAMPALA 00000463 003.2 OF 003

HOOVER